



**CITY OF SANTA BARBARA
CREEKS RESTORATION/WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES**

REGULAR MEETING

March 11, 2009

David Gebhard Public Meeting Room, 630 Garden Street

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Moldaver called the meeting to order at 5:32pm.

ROLL CALL

Committee members present: Chair Moldaver, Michael Jordan, Roger Schlueter, George Weber, Daniel Wilson

Committee members absent: None

Liaison members present: Park and Recreation Commissioner Daniel Hochman

Liaison members absent: Councilmember Iya Falcone, Planning Commissioner John Jostes

Staff present: Creeks Restoration/Clean Water Manager Cameron Benson, Creeks Supervisor George Johnson, Creeks Restoration Planner George Thomson, Creeks Program Assistant Liz Smith

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Wilson noted that during Public Comment at the January 14 meeting, he was referring to the Goleta Water District, and not the City of Goleta.

Motion:

Committee members Jordan/Weber to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of January 14, 2009 as amended.

Vote:

Unanimous voice vote.

AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one wished to speak.

Mr. Wilson encouraged members of the public viewing on television to attend meetings or contact the Committee.

COMMITTEE MEMBER AND STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Benson reported that Mr. O'Brien has resigned from the Committee due to concerns about the potential for a conflict of interest between the Committee's business and his employer; and, that recruitment for the Committee will begin at the end of April and interviews and appointments will take place in June, and noted that the City accepts applications at any time.

Mr. Benson reported that Mr. Hochman has resigned as a voting member of the Committee, and that he will now serve as the Park and Recreation Commission Liaison, replacing Ms. Longstreet. Mr. Benson presented a certificate of appreciation to Mr. Hochman and thanked him for his years of service on the Committee, and noted that he will present a certificate of appreciation to Ms. Longstreet at the Park and Recreation Commission meeting on March 25.

Mr. Benson noted that while the Committee currently has only five members, four are required to be in attendance to have a quorum and take any action.

Mr. Schlueter asked whether there is a mechanism to seat an alternate Committee member in the event that the Committee is low on membership.

SUBCOMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Mr. Benson reported that Mr. O'Brien's resignation has left vacancies on the Watersheds Subcommittee and the Education and Outreach Subcommittee.

Mr. Moldaver agreed to confer with staff and Committee members to fill the vacancies by the next meeting.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Committee members asked questions regarding how the Fiscal Year 2010 (FY 10) Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) projections will affect the Creeks Division budget.

Mr. Benson reported that staff has received FY 10 TOT projections, but they may be revised before the start of the fiscal year; and, that the Creeks Division is almost exclusively funded by 2% of the TOT.

Mr. Jordan noted that there will be a three part series this month on City TV Channel 18 focusing on the Creeks Division.

Mr. Benson added that the three programs will be about the Creeks Advisory Committee, the Upper Las Positas Creek Restoration and Storm Water Management Project, and the Creek Tree Program and Business Assistance Program.

Committee members asked where the \$110,000 reduction in the Fiscal Year 2009 budget will come from.

Mr. Benson reported that the \$110,000 will come out of the Operating budget in places where staff has realized significant savings already through the year, and identified places where cuts can be made without a reduction in services; and, noted that any unspent Operating funds will go into unappropriated reserves.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Benson reported that the Outreach and Education Subcommittee met on January 26 to discuss potential revisions to the existing Public Education Plan created in 2002.

Mr. Benson reported that the Budget Subcommittee met on February 12 to discuss the economy, Transient Occupancy Tax, Fiscal Year 2010 Creeks Division Operating and Capital budgets, and grant opportunities. The Budget Subcommittee will meet again in April to discuss more specific numbers, and staff will present the Fiscal Year 2010 budget to the full Committee at the May meeting.

BUSINESS ITEMS

10a. Upper Las Positas Creek Restoration and Storm Water Management Project

Recommendation:

That the Committee review the Upper Las Positas Creek Restoration and Storm Water Management Project and provide recommendations to Council to authorize transferring funds from the Creeks unappropriated reserve to cover the construction costs, and to authorize proceeding with construction.

Documents:

Staff Report – March 2009
Power Point Presentation – March 2009

Speakers:

George Thomson, Creeks Restoration Planner

Committee Questions/Discussion:

Mr. Jordan noted that most Committee members have walked the project site and supported the project in the past with the understanding that Measure B funds would be used to fund the project, and that opportunities to complete a project like this are few and far between.

Motion:

Committee members Jordan/Wilson to recommend that Council authorize transferring funds from the Creeks unappropriated reserves to cover the construction costs and to authorize proceeding with construction.

Committee Questions/Discussion:

Mr. Schlueter asked whether the motion is needed at this meeting, or better served after bids are received and a winner is selected.

Mr. Benson reported that the project is scheduled to go to Council on April 14, and that if the Committee did not address the project tonight, the recommendation would not be able to be in the Council Agenda Report.

Mr. Benson noted that it has been a long standing plan of the Committee and Division to transfer funds for the project from reserves, and is not related to the condition of the economy; and, that staff has received a \$20,000 grant for the Adams School portion of the project, has applied for and been denied five grants, has one grant pending for \$300,000, will be applying for stimulus funds, and will continue to seek funding for the project.

Committee members asked whether City TV will follow the project, particularly during construction; who will be responsible for ongoing site maintenance and monitoring; and, whether project maintenance will be included in the Operating budget.

Mr. Thomson reported that staff is working with City TV, and that they were present to film the bid walk and will film the groundbreaking; that the Creeks Division is committed to five years of onsite maintenance of the creek sites, and that after the first five years maintenance will be handed over to the Golf Division; and, that the Creeks Division has done, and will continue to do, extensive water quality monitoring of the site.

Mr. Benson reported that ongoing maintenance of the project will appear in the Operating budget each year.

Committee members asked questions regarding replacement of trees removed for the project; what effect tree removal will have on habitat; and, what the maintenance budget for five years will be.

Mr. Thomson reported that three new trees will be planted for each tree taken out; that four raptor surveys were performed, and with the number of trees at the site, sufficient resources exist to provide habitat; and, that staff is estimating \$25,000 for each of the first two years of maintenance, then \$10,000 to \$15,000 for the following years.

Public Comment:

No one wished to speak.

Vote:

Unanimous voice vote.

10b. Creek Tree Program – Six Month Status Report

Recommendation:

That the Committee receive a six month status report on the pilot Creek Tree Program.

Documents:

Staff Report – March 2009

Speakers:

George Johnson, Creeks Supervisor

Public Comment:

No one wished to speak.

Committee Questions/Discussion:

Committee members suggested that staff contact the Red Cross at State Street and Alamar Avenue as a potential project site, and share information about the program with the Santa Barbara Board of Realtors, Santa Barbara Beautiful, and local garden clubs.

Committee members asked whether staff has contacted or intends to contact Tea Fire area residents; whether staff feels that the price is discouraging to potential applicants; whether staff has considered using social media websites as a method for advertising; and, what the approximate price for the Housing Authority project was.

Mr. Johnson reported that staff decided to wait a year until after the rainy season to contact Tea Fire area residents; that the price has not discouraged residents, but there has been less interest in the program than anticipated; that staff has not used social media websites to advertise the program thus far, but has contacted residents who said in the past they would be interested in restoration of their property; that staff had estimated the Housing Authority project would cost approximately \$3,500, but that it turned out to be closer to \$2,900 for 27 trees and a drip irrigation system.

Mr. Wilson encouraged members of the public viewing on television to let the Creeks Division know their opinion of the program; and, suggested that the contractual agreement may scare residents away from participating in the program.

Mr. Johnson reported that staff can review the language with the City Attorney again, but that nobody has gotten through reviewing the guidelines and filling out the application only to back out due to the contract language.

10c. City Creeks Business Assistance Program – Six Month Status Report

Recommendation:

That the Committee receive a presentation on the Creeks Division Business Assistance Program.

Documents:

Staff Report – March 2009

Speakers:

George Johnson, Creeks Supervisor

Mr. Hochman left at 7:01pm.

Public Comment:

No one wished to speak.

Committee Questions/Discussion:

Committee members suggested staff contact the Chamber of Commerce, the Downtown Organization, John Dickson at the Daily Sound, the Adult Education program at Santa Barbara City College, utilize social media websites, and look at business licensing information to contact community members about the program.

Mr. Johnson noted that staff has worked with the County of Santa Barbara to provide training, demonstrations, and information specifically to mobile washers, which brought in the first participant in the program.

Committee members asked questions regarding the number of restaurants in the program and the number of restaurants in the City.

Mr. Johnson reported that there are currently 55 businesses participating in the Clean Water Business Certification Program, including restaurants, automotive businesses, and a few mobile businesses, and that there are 450 restaurants from the east side of Santa Barbara to the west side of Goleta.

Mr. Benson noted that there are approximately 30 restaurants participating in the certification program, but that in cases like Rusty's Pizza, only the restaurants in the City are certified, but since learning about and participating in the program, all five restaurants throughout the Santa Barbara area have implemented Best Management Practices.

Mr. Benson added that staff received an email from the Environmental Defense Center expressing their support of the Upper Las Positas Creek

Restoration and Storm Water Management Project as well as the Creek Tree Program.

Mr. Benson asked that one or more Committee members attend the April 14 Council meeting regarding the Upper Las Positas Creek Restoration Project.

Mr. Moldaver agreed to attend if available.

Mr. Jordan noted that he would be there giving public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion:

Committee Members Jordan/Weber to adjourn.

Chair Moldaver adjourned the meeting at 7:14pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Cameron Benson
Creeks Restoration/Clean Water Manager